

C
In Zw Kn

BACCALAUREATE SERMON.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

LIBRARY

LIBRARY

LIBRARY

LIBRARY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

BACCALAUREATE SERMON

TO THE

GRADUATING CLASS

OF THE

THE LIBRARY OF THE
JUL 1 - 1936
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Indiana State University,

Sabbath, June 23d, 1861,

BY

REV. CYRUS NUTT, D. D., PRESIDENT.

Published by the Senior Class.

Lux et Veritas.

INDIANAPOLIS:

INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL COMPANY, PRINTERS.

1861.

PUBLISHED BY THE SENIOR CLASS.

J. D. ALEXANDER,
R. S. EDGAR,
S. G. KIRKWOOD,
B. E. LONG,
J. S. NUTT,
JOHN ROBERTS,
B. F. ROGERS,
JOHN WATTS,
H. BENEDICT,
SIMEON GREEN,
J. W. WELCH,

S. W. DODDS,
B. G. HANNA,
H. C. LEGG,
J. H. LOUDON,
J. C. ORCHARD,
J. C. ROBINSON,
J. H. ROGERS,
H. C. BARTON,
S. A. EMISON,
R. M. J. MILLER,
T. W. ZOOK.

S E R M O N .

1 CORINTHIANS 16 : 13.—QUIT YOU LIKE MEN.

Every nation has her heroes, or GREAT MEN;—giants they are, in intellect or in action; for whose honor she is jealous, and deeply interested that her own heroes shall be excelled in renown by none. The legends of classic fable are but the poetic rehearsal of the glorious deeds of ancient great men.

The Greeks were proud of their Solon, Pericles, Miltiades, Plato,—their orators and poets. No less than seven cities contended most earnestly for the honor of having given birth to Homer, the Prince of Epic bards. Rome boasted of her Romulus, Cincinnatus, Cyprius, Marcelluses, and Cæsars. Germany of her Charlemagne, Luther, Charles the V., Leibnitz, Copernicus, Kant and Goethe. France, of her Martel, Francis I., Turenne, Mountmorencies, Louises and Napoleons; her Richlieus and Mazarins; her La Places, Arago, and Laverrier; her Guizot, Cousin, and Lamartines. The heart of the Englishman expands, as he recalls the names of Alfred, Coeur de Leon, the Edwards, Marlboroughs, Cromwells, and Wellingtons, and those of Bacon, Locke, Milton and Shakespeare. America, young as she is, has her host of heroes, her Washington, Warren, Putnam, Greene, Gates, and Montgomery; her Edwards, Prescott, Bancroft, Clay, Webster, and Calhoun.

HERO WORSHIP.

Hero worship is natural to the heart of man. In remote ages, those distinguished for great deeds, whose lives were devoted to the benefit of humanity, were placed at death, by their admiring and grateful survivors, among the Gods. A whole galaxy with numerous attendant constellations of stars, bestud the ancient mythological heavens. Even in the old Augustine age of science, history, and philosophy, when the earthly sceptre fell from his hand palsied by death, the Roman Emperor was transmitted very ceremoniously to the abodes of the Gods, and numbered with the celestial orders. The Roman Church, in the deification of the Saints, follows the illustrious precedent; and has even outdone the worshippers of Olympus, in multiplying the Senate of the skies. Though we may not approximate the same extreme of absurdity, if not profanity, there is no danger that the truly great among us, will want admirers and flatterers. No flaming meteors will cross the heavens without attracting the wonder of the million. The examples furnished by our own history show that the American mind and heart are no exception to the rule. The influence wielded, while living, by Jefferson, Jackson, Clay, and Webster, and the numerous hosts of devoted friends, who gathered around them, and the imperishable honors which still encircle their names, show the power of greatness to sway the masses, even of the sternest republicans. Some of the wisest patriots, and warmest friends of our free institutions, have had sad forebodings as to their permanency, when they have witnessed the strength of this sentiment among the people, as from time to time it has elevated some military leader to the presidential chair; and the note of earnest warning has been given, lest some American Cæsar, Cromwell, or Napoleon, should abuse his power, and seizing the reigns of government, install himself perpetual dictator, and crush the republic.

DESIRE OF GREATNESS.

Greatness is the aim of all generous minded youth. Those possessed of a noble nature, have a burning desire for distinction, glowing in their hearts and nerving them to the most arduous efforts. Themistocles, when but a youth, remarked, that since the battle of Marathon, he was unhappy, "that the fame of Miltiades would not let him sleep." He afterwards took the first honors of Greece, and became the hero of Salamis.

To become great, many seem to suppose, that they have only to imitate the customs, imbibe the habits, and practice the peculiarities and eccentricities of some acknowledged great man, and of necessity, the same renown will wait upon their steps. No mistake more ridiculous and ruinous could be made. The intemperance and dissoluteness of a Byron, have proved fatal to many promising young men, who affected the garb and deportment of the great poet, and thought they were Byron's. The copies, alas! in every case bear no traces of the original, except in vices and follies. Another mistake is made with scarcely less frequency, which is quite as disgusting as the former. It is the assumption of the air, pomp, and dignity, erroneously supposed to belong to great men; and the claiming the respect and honor pertaining to the genuine article. Such look around with consequential attitudes to see if their importance is duly recognized. These are the counterfeits of the genuine coin—imitations of nature's noblemen; gaseous inflations, subject to frequent and amusing collapses. These apparitions seldom do any harm, as the community easily detect the bogus specimens, and consign them to merited contempt.

It is a subject of the highest importance to know clearly the elements of true greatness. Thousands of young hearts are burning with a laudable ambition to become distinguished as laborers for the advancement of our race; and to leave a bright record on the page of history, and their names embalmed, by the good which they have done in the hearts of

coming generations. In this field all should labor, and he who thus distinguishes himself above his fellows is truly great. The truly great stands above the masses, remarkable for the possession of superior powers and their diligent employment in doing good. The great man is such because he does more for humanity than common men. Great powers unemployed darken and expire. Great minds, like the fire-fly, are seen only when on the wing. If exerted for no useful purpose they are like the swells of the ocean—a great wind, or a great noise. If those vast powers are exerted for destruction, their possessor may be a great monster—a tornado—an earthquake—a great curse—but *not a great man*.

Great men are born, not made. There must be a foundation before there can be a splendid edifice erected. A superior mind must be his inheritance, and yet it must be cultivated. Cicero's answer to the old mooted question, "Whether nature or education avails more to form the truly great," will never be bettered. He says, "It is doubted whether great men are more indebted to nature or education; but when great natural endowments are united with the best culture the highest excellence is attained." The best natural gifts will not, however, ensure a passport to renown; since they may be buried and useless. Education is to nature what sculpture is to the marble; it brings out the full developed form in all its chiseled beauty, from the rude block. There may be some truth in the lines of the poet:

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its fragrance on the desert air."

This partakes, however, much more of poetry than of fact. It may be true in those climes where caste is a fixture, presenting an impassable barrier to distinction. But it is a significant fact, that the most distinguished in the fields of literature are from the lower walks in life. The fiercer and more intense the struggle requisite to overcome the obstacles, but nerves the generous soul with greater force, which, when the barriers

are once surmounted and the fetters broken, carries its subject in a higher flight, to the loftiest elevation.

SELF-CULTURE.

Great men make themselves great. All true culture is the result of individual self-effort. The mightiest intellect, in embryo, would perish undeveloped without the most vigorous exercise. Seminaries, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, are of no avail where indolence is supreme. Laboratories and books are of no value to those that will not use them. They furnish the tools and material for the workmen, and a constant stimulus to exertion. Improvement must come from within. Helps may come from without, but each must help himself if he would be a man. Thousands go forth from the institutions of learning bearing their diplomas properly authenticated; yet very few rise above their fellows, to that degree which would justify the appellation—great. Many rely too much upon their external advantages, their degrees and college honors, and on this ground alone think that all should regard them as *sir oracle*. Great is their disappointment when they find that they are but common men. A young man from the east settled in our glorious west, surrounded by circumstances favorable to success. Attending a political meeting he aimed to take a leading part, and made several speeches, when a plain unassuming farmer took him down effectually, answering his arguments, and carrying his measures against his young opponent. The young man became exceedingly vexed, and when the convention closed, he took his rural competitor to task for his presumption; saying that he regarded it as a great outrage, that he, an unlearned man, should presume to oppose HIM, who had graduated at two Universities, and then had attended two law schools and taken his parchments. I do not doubt it, in the least, said the farmer. I once had a calf which sucked two cows and afterwards sucked two more; and the more he sucked the greater calf he became!

GREAT IN HEART.

It is not intellect alone, however that makes the great man; he must have also a great soul. His heart must be noble and strong. Great sentiments are also requisite. Intellect may gleam and dazzle; so does the Aurora Borealis over the immense fields of ice and snow of the arctic regions. It requires the warmth of a genial sun to unfold the productions, so noble and beautiful, of the temperate and tropical climes. The affections are the sun of our moral nature. They furnish the stimulus to action—the driving wheels of life. In this department is included the consciousness of right—the power of moral obligation, than which, nothing contributes more to give force to character, and to impell its possessor to a lofty and sublime career. The axe may be of keenest edge and tempered to perfection; and yet, if no hand wield the instrument no work will be done. The sword may be a true Damascus blade, but if no soldier's arm, strong and skillful, wields it, no execution is wrought, no foe is slain. The engine may be perfect in its construction, yet it stands unmoved upon its iron track, but when the fires are kindled and the steam applied, how speedily it is off with the velocity of lightning on her distant journey. Such is a great heart to a mighty intellect; the soldier's arm to the sword; the steam to the Locomotive; the powder ignited to the cannon ball!

It is said, "The world knows not her greatest men." Of one species of greatness this may be true, a great intellect without the impelling power of strong passions. There are doubtless many who possess native gifts of a high order, sufficient to carry them to the highest pinnacle of fame; but they are never roused to intense exertion, and for want of excitement, slumber out their lives, and their graves are unknown. In all such cases there is real weakness, and that at a vital point. The passions are weak—force is wanting. True greatness *will* make itself known! Amid the din and noise of this busy world, where each is intent upon his own

schemes, and projects, it requires tremendous efforts, a clap of thunder, an earthquake to *arrest* the attention of others, and turn the rushing tide of their thoughts and feelings into our channels—our plans and measures; and induce them to weigh their value, and adopt them as their own. Man must be deeply in earnest himself before he can gain the attention of earnest men. If not in deep earnest, the world either pities his weakness or condemns his hypocrisy.

MOTIVE TO SELF-CULTURE.

The motive to self-culture should not be simply the possession of excellence; not the acquisition of talent intended to be buried or laid away in a napkin. This would be the extreme of selfishness—the miser's trade. We should covet earnestly the best gifts only for the sake of being more useful. The effects, the results, should ever be kept in view. All personal improvement should look to this end. God did not create suns, stars, and planets to shine on their own account; but to reflect His glory, and shed light throughout the universe. The bright orbs glittering in the intellectual and moral heavens were not created for themselves but to glorify their maker, and shed their light on the darkness of the moral world. This devotion to the true objects of life on earth—this earnestness must have its being in the depths profound of a great soul. All great men are self-sacrificing, laboring not for themselves but for man.

GREAT FAITH.

Great intellects and great hearts are indispensable requisites in great men. Another element is equally essential which is strong FAITH. The word is not here used in a strictly theological sense. We do not mean that he must be a devoted adherent to the Thirty-nine Articles, or any extended category of religious dogmas. He must have an unwavering confidence in God and his providence, and in the ultimate tri-

umph of the right. Faith, in the sense of confidence, lies at the foundation of all action. Scepticism and doubt paralyze every effort. Doubt is an element of weakness ending in despair! It is the choke damp of the world. Faith, on the other hand, is a fountain of life and a tower of strength. Nothing nerves to exertion, and tunes up the soul to persistency, in the face of opposition, like the firm belief that failure is an impossibility. How appropriate is the definition of the inspired writer: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." One must have confidence in his own powers—in the instruments which he employs—the agencies brought to bear, and the benefits resulting from the accomplishment of his plans. With tremendous energy, the man thus endowed, can throw himself—all his powers—into his work, and feats are performed which startle the world, and become astounding even to himself, when he coolly re-surveys them in the the past.

He who begins to doubt, like Peter begins to sink, and a failure is certain. All the efforts of such an one are but half hearted and he quails at the least difficulties. Such never succeed except by accident—their half-heartedness invites opposition, and ensures a failure. Some always succeed. They are remarkable for the accomplishment of their schemes. They are the successful men, because they never doubt; others always fail because they expect a failure. "According to their faith, so it is unto them."

Search the records of the past, and no instance can be found where skeptics accomplished anything great, except in folly. The tendency of their creed is to tear down, not to build up—to destroy, not to create—to waste not to produce. Their labors have been nugatory, or positively injurious to society. Voltaire, Gibbon, and Hume, might at first view, be deemed exceptions to this rule. But their historical works, which among their writings are the only ones possessing true merit, were the result of their faith, not of their scepticism.

Their scepticism served only to mar their noblest productions, while those whose names are recorded on the roll of fame, have ever been distinguished for the strength of their faith. The leaders of great moral and religious revolutions, have always been men of remarkable faith. Such were Abraham, Moses, Paul, Augustin, Luther, Wesley. Notwithstanding their gigantic intellectual powers, their strong unbending faith was the most prominent trait in their characters. The same is true of the great discoverers in the fields of science and art; Gallileo, Capernicus, Bacon, Locke, Columbus, Newton, Herschell, La Place, La Verrier, and Dr. Kane, manifested their faith in the most striking manner. That it is the very soul of success in military affairs, is well known. Nothing more surely entails defeat on the field, than distrust of the ability of the commander. The first duty of the captain is to inspire his soldiers with confidence. The disastrous effects of defeat are more terrible from its demoralizing influence, than from the loss of killed, wounded, and prisoners. A general, or an army, frequently beaten, will never prove victorious, since they do not expect victory; discouraged and broken in spirits as they are, by previous misfortunes.

It is a remarkable fact that all the Generals of antiquity, had implicit faith in the support and guardianship of supernatural power. Cyrus, the great, trusted in the fiat of the supreme God, "That all Asia was to be his; since it was foreshadowed by the dream of his grand-father, who beheld the vine springing from his house and spreading over the entire continent." Alexander believed that the fates had awarded him the empire of the world, as he accepted the forced declaration of the Pythoness at Delphi: "Son thou art invincible!" Hence with the bold stroke of his sword, he cuts the Gordian Knot, and strikes down the mighty monarch of Persia. Scipio Africanus, when about to carry the war into Africa, went alone to the temple of the Gods, where he remained for a long time, and when he took his place at the

head of the Legions, he firmly believed that the Gods went with him to guide and sustain him in conquering the conqueror—the invincible Hannibal. Hannibal also, himself the conqueror of the Alps, and Italy's mightiest foe, was sustained by his firm reliance upon the leadership of the God, on whose altar he had consecrated himself in childhood. He has described the vision with which he was favored, which was the form of a beautiful female that seemed to move upon the air, and, constantly beckoning him forward, suffered him not to rest. Julius Cæsar, the second world's conqueror, was inspired with confidence in his destiny. The same element has entered into the character of modern military leaders. The wonderful career of the Maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc, is familiar to all readers of history. The heavenly visitant in the form of an angel, appeared to her, as she affirmed, in her rural home, and guided her in all her plans and movements, until her mission was ended, in the crowning of the King of France, at Rheims. A career of military glory and success was achieved by Napoleon I., unparalled in the history of time. The passage of the bridge at Lodi, as he himself has stated, amid the iron tempest, by which the narrow passage was swept, without a wound, first imparted to him the thought that he was something more than common—that some great destiny was provided for him and that he was a favorite child of fortune. He often, afterward, referred to his star—the star of Destiny. This faith nerved him to the conflict and aroused his mightiest energies, and sustained him in his almost superhuman labors. The same principle was prominently developed in the mind of Charles XII., of Sweden, the Alexander of the north. Something of the same kind was dimly shadowed in the life of our Washington. That great man had great confidence in the God of battles. That power which turned aside from their mark the bullets, fired with deadly aim, by the savage chief at Braddock's field, was the subject of his unwavering trust. The religion of a great man, must,

then, have much to do with his character and success. Of all systems of religious faith ever propagated on earth, *Christianity* is the most favorable to the development of *Great Men*! The grandeur of its conceptions, the sublimity of its thoughts, the infinitude of the Attributes of the Deity—his Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Omniscience, and the vastness of eternity, must expand the soul, exalt the intellect and enoble the heart of man. The unmeasurable depths of God's love to man as manifested in the cross, and melting pathos of the dying agonies of his Son, are the happiest forms in which the supernatural has ever been presented to the human mind, and best calculated to awaken every latent energy of the soul in labor, glowingly intense, until it has scaled the very heavens. Christianity presents also the purest and strongest motives to effort, by appealing to the most powerful affections, and unfolding the good results of such labor in an increasing tide, spreading over the boundless field of eternity. The benefits to ourselves and others, appear not only throughout the fleeting years of time, but during the countless ages to come! Certainty of success and infinite reward are promised in the Bible.

In this christian age then to doubt, is weakness, either intellectual or moral. More heroes, in the true sense of the term, have been produced by it than by all the forms and phases of other religions. This is but the natural result of its teachings and examples, since they are of such a nature as to move most deeply the heart, and quicken the thoughts. None of the loftiest flights of the sublimest poets, no romance by the most celebrated author, can transport imagination to flights so elevated, and bear it on pinions so strong, as the songs of the inspired seers. Here is a fountain of celestial life to thought, feeling, and faith. It transmutes weakness into strength, timidity into courage, and makes the trembling female and the little child stronger and more enduring than the steel-clad warrior, yea, mightier than kings and emperors—

than all the powers of earth—mightier even than death itself, frowning with his utmost terror amid racks, gibbets, and martyr-fires. Such is the power of christianity to sustain. How great then must be its power to inspire courage for action? Patience under suffering requires greater moral courage, and stronger effort of self-control, than aggressive efforts, however perilous and painful. In the latter there is the employment of the thoughts in devising plans and schemes of attack, and the stimulus from activity; and suffering is not felt from the want of attention to it. Thousands will march bravely into battle, and storm the breach in the face of almost certain death, while but few can stand to their arms, in position, while their ranks are thinned by the destructive fire of the enemy.

SELF RELIANCE.

Great men are self-reliant. They depend upon themselves both for thoughts and measures. They are great and independent thinkers, forming their own opinions, deducing their own conclusions, borrowing from none. They adopt no other man's views, or follow his lead upon mere trust. They may subscribe to the same platform with their party in politics and religion; they may agree with thousands of others, or rather these thousands may agree with them; but their creed is adopted, not because it contains the doctrine of the party, but because they have subjected the whole to a searching analysis, weighed all the arguments bearing upon it, and thus have demonstrated the truth of the theory. The great man waits for no individual or party of men, such a course would be inconsistent with his course of independent action. Waiting for others, following their lead, relying upon those of acknowledged talent, is to be a satellite, not a sun. Great men shine by their own light, not with borrowed rays. The latter is dependence and intellectual serverility—it is to be a mere hawker and retailer of other men's wares. The

brighter the orb around which such satellites revolve, the greater the obscurity of the secondaries.

It is not here implied that great men never derive aid from others. They may gather hints, suggestions, and facts from men, from books, from experience; but they work up these for themselves classifying, generalizing, and applying them according to their own judgments. Here is manifested mental power above the masses which leads to the discovery of new truths, and new modes of expressing old ones, and clothing them with might which they did not before possess. These strut forth in *no borrowed plumes*—no hue and cry is raised after them by the ghosts of departed great men, who have been plundered of their intellectual wealth—they suffer no arrests from living authors whose thunder they have stolen. Whatever they present is original, strictly their own, and they have no spasmodic dread of detectives! Habits of long continued and close thought lie at the foundation of self-reliance. He must see with his mind's eye, the whole subject in all its parts and relations. He walks firmly in the light of his own mind, never floundering in the dark, lost in the fog, as all satellites must do, when thrown from their beaten track and away from their masters. He has thought out the whole subject, knows every weak point and all the strong weapons of defense. Secure in his intellectual castle, well fortified, he stands prepared to resist every assault.

Hence the fearlessness, with which he enunciates his propositions. Mind governs the world; it is omnipotent in regard to the temporal powers of earth. Its dominion over matter is seen in the triumphs of modern science, which render this age number one among all those that are past. Thoughts subvert thrones, overturn empires, and revolutionize the world. They are the deep seated fires of the volcano, whose heavings and earthquake-throe's make continents tremble. They who have great and new thoughts hold a lever power which Archimedes could not find.

The habit of close thought must be formed in youth. If

not then acquired, its subsequent attainment becomes impossible. The habit of relying upon others and constantly looking for foreign aid, utterly disqualifies the mind for thorough investigation; reason becomes paralyzed, and for want of exercise expires. The unfortunate owner is mentally helpless. In such a case he sometimes puts on the air of greatness, clad, like the youthful David, in the armor of Saul. But not like him, he has not sense enough to put it aside, knowing its unsuitableness. He appears with the thoughts and sentiments which do not suit him; like the little boy in his father's boots, coat, and hat. The hat comes down upon his shoulders, the coat trails upon the ground, and the boots perfectly swamp him; so that he is invisible in the extraneous and comical garb. Equally ridiculous is the farce of the satellite which mistakes himself for a man.

GREAT IN INDUSTRY.

Great men have always been remarkable for industry. It is the doom of humanity that nothing good can be obtained without great labor. Life is a battle—a conflict. Every one who would live honestly, must labor with his body or his mind. He who desires to be distinguished, must labor earnestly and constantly. Indolence, coupled with the most splendid talents, would sink them inevitably in the dark sea of oblivion. The gas must be ignited before its flames can expel the darkness of midnight. Great souls must be lighted and kept in flame, ere they can drive away the gloom of earth's midnight.

Demosthenes and Cicero were examples of intense application. The herculean labors of the Greek philosopher are familiar as the oft told tale. "Honors must be plucked from the pale-faced moon; or diving into ocean's depths you must drag up drowned honor by the locks." Every great man is a miracle of industry. Origen, the head and founder of the Alexandrian school of the christian fathers, and the most distinguished among them for learning was the author of these

thousand volumes. And these he wrote amid the incessant labors of preaching and teaching. The labors of Luther seem almost incredible, while those of Calvin and Wesley are absolutely astounding. They are the Napoleons of the moral world. Each was the author of more volumes than we would suppose one man could write, had he the command of all his time, and diligently devoted it to that purpose; and yet this labor was but the relaxation of those monarch minds. They performed labor enough to task to the utmost half a dozen ordinary men, in preaching and lecturing. Wesley's annual circuit of three thousand miles on horseback and on foot before the age of railroads, was traveled nearly sixty years in succession, with unflagging zeal and energy. The same is true of the great men of modern times. Walter Scott, Lord Palmerston, Derby, Russell, Gladstone, Bulwer, Brougham, and a host of others, might be named, whose memories will be transmitted to the latest generations. Take an example or two:—Lord Brougham stands conspicuous among the stars of the first magnitude. "His indefatigable industry has become proverbial, and has now extended over a period of upwards of sixty years, during which he has ranged over many fields—law, literature, and science; and achieved distinction in them all. How he contrived it has been a mystery to many. Once, when Sir Samuel Romily was requested to undertake some new work, he excused himself, saying, 'that he had not time.' 'But,' he added, 'go to that fellow Brougham, he seems to have time for everything.' He never left a minute unemployed, and he had with all, a constitution of iron. When arrived at an age at which most men would have retired from the world to their hard earned leisure, perhaps to doze away their time in an easy chair, Lord Brougham commenced and prosecuted a series of elaborate investigations as to the laws of light, and he submitted the results to the most scientific audiences that Paris and London could muster. About the same time he was passing through the press his

admirable sketches of the men of science and literature of the age of George III., and taking his full share of the law business and political discussions of the House of Lords. The facetious Sidney Smith on one occasion, recommended him to confine himself to the transaction of so much business only, as three strong men could get through. But such was Lord Brougham's love of work—long become a habit—that no amount of exertion seems to have been too great for him; and such was his love of excellence, that it has been said of him, that had his station in life been a shoe black, he would never have rested satisfied until he had become the best shoe black in England."

Napoleon and Wellington were the hardest workers of their age. The former often kept four secretaries employed at once, and when they were exhausted by continuous labor, he employed others, taking no rest himself night or day, for several days together, both when he was in the cabinet and in the field. Wellington always slept upon his camp bedstead, which, lest he should sleep too long, was made so narrow that he could not turn over on it without a fall. The prince of modern orators, Whitefield, like Demosthenes, was most diligent in his preparation. He trained his voice, features countenance, and gestures with the most sedulous care. He practiced with Garrick, the most celebrated actor of the period, and continued to improve even to the fortieth repetition of his performances. Patrick Henry in those long summer days spent in solitude, when the people supposed he was fishing, practiced his voice and acquired that distinct and powerful enunciation, which enchained public assemblies, and enraptured senates. Webster, too, was most industrious in the cultivation of his powers. Those eloquent words, so familiar to every school boy, uttered at Bunker Hill, "Ye venerable men, you have come down to us from a former generation," had, no doubt, been frequently addressed in his youth to the trout glancing in the brook, where he spent his childhood. Henry

Clay, Kentucky's noblest son, and the nation's pride, himself declared that scarcely a day had passed since his early manhood, in which he did not practice the art of public speaking. No day passed without his giving utterance to his own thoughts or those of others; sometimes with the trees as his auditors, sometimes the standing corn, or wondering herds. There is no royal road to excellence, no more than to geometry. Poets are no exceptions to this rule; Walter Scott diligently studied his vernacular tongue, visiting the marts of business and cottages of the common people, noting the words they used, and studying the workings of the human heart. Byron, most dissolute and seemingly most indolent of writers, was most laborious in cultivating his imagination; for this purpose reading the sublimest portions of the poets of his own and foreign lands.

POWER OF WILL.

Another essential element of greatness is a strong will. "Woe to the faint hearted," says the Son of Siraih. Most failures come from checking the horse in the act of leaping. Energy of will is the very central power in man—in a word, it is the man himself. It gives impulse to every action and soul to every effort. Of itself it is a tower of strength. It is related of a young French officer, that he used to walk about his apartments exclaiming, "I will be Marshal of France, and a great general." This ardent desire was the presentiment of success, for he became a distinguished commander and died Marshal of France. Mr. Walker, author of the original dictionary, had so much faith in the power of the will, that upon one occasion he determined to be well, and he *was* so. This may not always succeed, but yet it is safer to follow than many prescriptions. The power of the mind over the body is astonishing. Muley Moluc, a Moorish leader, was lying ill, almost worn out by an incurable disease, when a battle took place between his troops and the Portuguese. Starting from his litter at the great crisis of the fight, he rallied

his army, led them to victory, and instantly afterwards sank exhausted, and expired. Dr. Kane, who triumphed over Polar snows and ice and the rigors of the arctic winter, in demonstrating the power of the will over ourselves and others, relates of himself, "that when almost dead with disease, he could scarcely lift his hand to his head, surrounded by half his crew in a condition little better than his own, with only two who were just able to crawl about, their only attendants, while the cold was 70 deg. below zero, and these two quarreling with each other and about to engage in deadly conflict; and just then news is brought that a number of his companions, who had gone to make explorations still nearer the Pole, were lost and perishing from hunger and frost. Then the sick man rises, commands the peace between the belligerent companions, and starts out with his guide and a few of the Esquimaux, in search of the lost—finds them and brings them back to the ship."

He who firmly resolves upon doing a thing, by that very resolution often scales the barrier to it, and secures its achievement. To think that we are able is almost to be so. Thus, earnest resolution often seems to have about it almost the savor of Omnipotence. "Suworrow, the great Russian general, would have the word *impossible* banished from the Dictionary. *I don't know, I can't, and impossible*, he detested above all others. *Learn, do, try*, he would exclaim." "Impossible," said Napoleon, "is to be found only in the dictionary of fools." His favorite maxim was, "The truest wisdom is a resolute determination." He was told that the Alps stood in his way. "There shall be no Alps," he said, and the road across the Simplon was constructed. This power of his mighty will inspired with new life and energy all around him. "I made my generals out of mud," he said. "He threw his whole force of body and mind direct upon his work. Imbecile rulers of the states of Europe and the nations they governed, went

down before him, and the continent was revolutionized. Such were the miracles accomplished by one resolute will."

NEVER WAIT FOR OPPORTUNITIES.

The great man never sits down idly waiting for some favorable opportunity to commence his career. An all-important element of success is the tact to seize and appropriate the advantages which the present affords, and even to divert the currents of opposition in his favor—to convert the circumstances, untoward in themselves, to the advancement of his cause. By the aid of a due degree of sagacity, and a strong will this can be done. This is bending of the branches we cannot break, and turning them in the opposite direction. The truly great man, makes even his enemies to serve him, by the skillful use of the influences which they exert.

In waiting, precious time is squandered, and his powers are languishing and wasting, and soon will be rusted out. He will begin immediately, if one door is not open, he finds another, and if none can be found he makes one. He can make opportunities—battling against the evils and wrongs of humanity—there is enough always to do. The field is broad, and room for all can easily be found. Progress is the watchword of the age. The advancement of science, reforms in politics, in morals, and the advancement of christianity, present the most inviting fields. He selects his object, then labors constantly for its accomplishment. In the department of science he explores the realms which he has chosen, discovers new laws and properties of matter, and advances the knowledge of man, and his dominion over the material creation, and thus contributes to the happiness of the world. In political affairs, he shows the oppression and absurdity of old systems, and presents new models of states, and freer forms of government. In moral reform he is frequently a great benefactor of the race. He exposes in stronger light the evils of intemperance, and the hideousness of vice—displays

before the eyes of the unwary the gins and pitfalls of death, and thousands of victims take warning and are saved.

So in religion, he may level successfully his artillery against lifeless, powerless, vice-tolerating formalism, wherever it is found enshrined, and he may, with a hand that sometimes seems rude, tear off the sheep's clothing from the wolves which assumed it, and present true christianity in all its power and loveliness, according to the heavenly pattern left us by the Saviour. Then with burning apostolic zeal, he may go forth the messenger of life to a dying world, spreading the glad currents of redemption in heathen lands, and bringing them to be the inheritance of Christ.

He may be often opposed by unreasonable men, persecuted, villified, as was Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, but he heeds it not, laboring on, and if he dies a martyr, his blood like that of Abel, shall speak to all generations following. Then a glorious reward awaits him in the home of the skies. He may not be appreciated in his own age. His sun may not arise at once, but though long delayed, it will burst forth with greater glory at the appropriate time; and future generations will embalm his fame, and eternity will unfold it amid the rapt applause of the heavenly hosts.

GREAT MEN UNCOURTEOUS.

Those who have attained distinction by their talents and labor are sometimes accused of incivility and want of sociability. They are supposed to be proud and haughty in spirit, and that they have an aversion to mingling with the masses, "holding the vulgar crowd in supreme contempt."

This is a great mistake—for none are so free from all haughtiness and self-elation, as the truly great man. He is too well acquainted with his own imperfections and weakness to be proud, and too much in sympathy with his race; his love for them is too strong and burning to permit him to despise any man. Nor is his love of society less; but on the

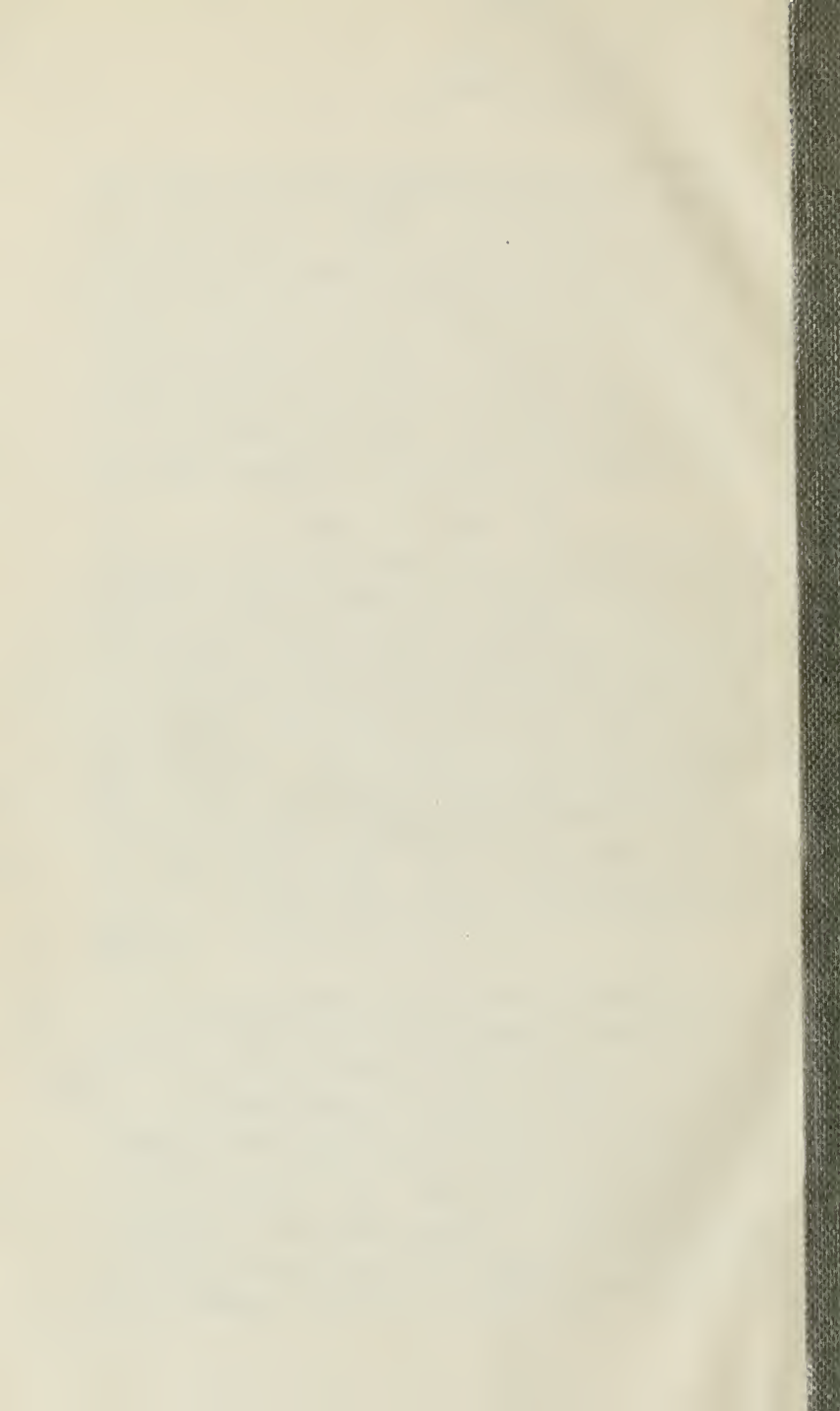
contrary all the noble, amiable traits, and sentiments are more vigorously developed in his bosom than in common hearts. None would take more delight—none would be better prepared to shine in the social circle than he. The reason why he mingles so little in society is the necessity of constant employment. He feels the necessity of husbanding every moment of time, as there is so much to do, and so little space for its accomplishment, that he must be parsimonious of hours. Like the dying saint of a former age, who, at the close of a laborious life, when on his bed and his hand was no longer able to guide his pen, employed his amanuensis to record his translation of the gospels; as his breath was growing short, he poured forth the sacred truth with hastening rapidity. The death shiver comes over him—his voice falters—it is only for a moment. He speaks to the scribe, “hasten, I feel better.” A few words more, and he pours forth the blessed words of the Saviour. He is weaker, and while he is yet dictating he ceases to breathe, and angels carry his spirit home. Sublime also is the scene of the dying Senator, Thos. H. Benton, when unable to sit up, he still labored with herculean energy upon his great work, the Congressional Debates; writing himself as long as he was able, and when too weak for that, employing his daughter as his secretary. He died the with harness on. Thus, avaricious of time must those be, who accomplish any good for the world. They have not the time, therefore, to stop and talk with every one, or to mingle in every social gathering. Their duties to others forbid it; having obligations to fulfil for the whole of their race, it would be wrong to permit the curiosity, convenience, or caprice of an individual, to interfere with those obligations. Again, they have no disposition to be lionized or made a public show, to be gazed at by the idle crowd. Retirement, while it is necessary for the accomplishment of their work is much more genial to their modesty, as they are thus able to withdraw from public gaze. But to any one having business of

importance concerning the public weal, none can be more polite or talk with more readiness and familiarity, or make his visitor more at ease. Should a leisure moment occur, you will find him most ready to converse and serve you in any manner, and you feel that in him you have a friend on whom you can safely rely. If at other times he is inaccessible and seems unceremonious and bluff, do not judge him severely; pressing business calls and he has no time to spare. But the most kind hearted of friends is this same noble man, and most ready to sacrifice his own interests for the sake of others.

BENEFITS OF GREAT MEN.

That such minds and hearts are a great blessing to the world it would seem superfluous to attempt to prove. Indeed without them there could be no progress. If there was no one more than ordinarily gifted, the car of improvement could not be pushed forward, and scarcely could its present position be maintained. The history of the world is but the history of its great men. All the advancement in the sciences, all improvement in the arts, all the great reforms in government, in morals, in religion, have been initiated and carried forward by these mighty spirits. Each nation has invaluable treasure in her great men. They should be encouraged and cherished, and their voice should be heeded as the oracle of Wisdom.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN:—As you have now finished your collegiate course, the time has come when we must bid you farewell. Let me say in behalf of the Faculty, that holy memories of the hours which we have spent together in these classic halls, shall ever linger in our hearts; and our most earnest wishes for your success will ever attend you throughout the subsequent battle of life. Let your watch-word ever be "*Excelsior*,"—still higher excellence. Higher, says the germ as it breaks through the soil, and expands its leaves to drink in the sunbeam and the dew; higher says the vine, as it





UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 111884810